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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/602,658	06/25/2003	Rick Gildart	2477 US	1054

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EXAMINER

LUONG, SHIAN TINH NHAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3728

DATE MAILED: 03/01/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/602,658

Applicant(s)

GILDART, RICK

Examiner

Shian T. Luong

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,6,7,10,11 and 19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,6,7,10,11 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 6 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The specification does not disclose cylindrical and only disclose “substantially cylindrical”. In addition, the drawing only shows a substantially cylindrical bag and not a completely cylindrical bag. Clarification is required.

3. Claims 6, 10-11 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The term “cylindrical” appears to be inaccurate because the bag appears to be tapered. In claim 19, the bag is not both cylindrical and tapered. In claim 10, the term “Christmas tee” appears to be an error. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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5. Claims 1-2,4,7 and 19 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moore (US 5,590,775). Moore discloses a tree bag comprising a sheet having a top end 28, a bottom end 30 and two opposing sides. The bag is tapered or substantially cylindrical. A mating zipper closure 48,50 secured along opposing sides such that when said mating closure is fully mated, the sheet forms a bag open on the top end and the bottom end of a size to accommodate a tree therein. The tree can be a small tree that fits into the opening. A handle 16,18 is formed longitudinally on an exterior surface of the bag. An upper drawing strip 36 along the top end of the sheet to close the open top end of the bag and a lower drawstring along the bottom of the sheet operable to close the open bottom end of the bag. When the mating closure is partially closed, the sheet does form a skirt that is positionable about the trunk of the tree. Contrary to applicant's assertion, Moore only has to show the structure that is capable of performing the function, in this case, forming a skirt in a partially mated position. Hence, Moore anticipates the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 6 is finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore. It would have been obvious to provide a cylindrical bag as a matter of design choice.

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8. Claims 10-11 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore in view of Blackburn et al. (US 4,799,520) and Fitzgerald (US 4,969,55). Moore discloses a tree bag comprising a sheet having a top end 28, a bottom end 30 and two opposing sides. The bag is tapered or substantially cylindrical. A mating zipper closure 48,50 secured along opposing sides such that when said mating closure is fully mated, the sheet forms a bag open on the top end and the bottom end of a size to accommodate a tree therein. The tree can be a small tree that fits into the opening. A handle 16,18 is formed longitudinally on an exterior surface of the bag. An upper drawing strip 36 along the top end of the sheet to close the open top end of the bag and a lower drawstring along the bottom of the sheet operable to close the open bottom end of the bag. When the mating closure is partially closed, the sheet does form a skirt that is positionable about the trunk of the tree. Moore does not specifically give out the detail of setting up the bag around a tree on a tree stand. However, Blackburn et al. teaches placing a sheet around the Christmas tree stand and the tree. Fitzgerald also teaches placing a corset around a tree. The user would buckle the first several sets of mating fasteners 16 and 18 around the trunk of the tree to lift the corset in a funnel-shaped position. This position would cover any tree stand below. Therefore, it would have been obvious in view of Blackburn et al. and Fitzgerald to partially button the mating closure to form a tree skirt over the tree stand.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Telephone inquiries regarding the status of applications or other general questions, by persons entitled to the information, should be directed to the group clerical personnel and not to the examiners. In as much as the official records and applications are located in the clerical section of the examining groups, the clerical personnel can readily provide status information without contacting the examiners, M.P.E.P. 203.08.


If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers should be directed to Erica Miller at (571) 272-4370.

For applicant's convenience, the official FAX number is (703) 872-9306. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify Examiner Luong of Art Unit 3728 at the top of your cover sheet of any correspondence submitted.

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Inquiries concerning the merits of the examination should be directed to Shian Luong whose telephone number is (571) 272-4557. The examiner can normally be reached on M-H from 7:00am to 4:00pm EST.

STL
February 28, 2005


Primary Examiner
Shian Luong
Art Unit 3728